FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

28 DECEMBER 1983

Lebanon

Security Situation — Lebanese Army positions came under intermittent gunfire on 27 December despite the latest cease-fire, Beirut radio reported. A British soldier was wounded by an explosion in Beirut and a French convoy came under fire, the radio also noted. South of Beirut, fighting continued in the Al-Kharrub district, where 3 people were killed and 12 others were wounded by shellfire on the town of Shhim, the radio said.

In the Israeli-occupied sector, an Israeli border police officer was killed and another policeman was wounded in a clash with a "terrorist" squad east of Sidon late on 26 December, the IDF spokesman announced in a statement reported by Jerusalem radio. Three "terrorists" were killed in exchanges of fire which started when a police patrol apprehended them as they preparing to plant a bomb. Six explosions in Sidon the following night wounded six persons, according to Beirut radio.

Government News Conference — The security plan to be completed this week will be a "major political step forward" that will change existing conditions. Foreign Minister Elie Salim stated at a news conference reported by Beirut radio. Although the plan will not affect areas under Syrian and Israeli military control, it will allow the Lebanese Army and Internal Security Forces to deploy in certain areas in and around Beirut from which Phalangist and Progressive Socialist Party forces will withdraw, he disclosed.

As for the Lebanese Army's recent deployment in the Sabra and Shatila areas, Information Minister Roger Shaykhani and Assistant Chief of Army Intelligence Colonel Nabil Farhat stressed that the Army was merely acting on its policy of filling every vacuum created by the withdrawal of other forces. The Army was notified only 10 minutes before the French withdrawal from the area and consequently had insufficient time to plan the operation, Farhat pointed out. Shaykhani revealed that the Army arrested around 150 people in Shatila and Sabra, of whom 52 are subject to deportation as "aliens" lacking legal documents.

PLO Affairs

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat presided over a meeting of the PLO Military Council in San'a', Baghdad Voice of PLO radio reported. Discussions focused on current political developments, the results of the Tripoli battle against the "Syrian-Libyan plot," and future Palestinian military action, "particularly inside the occupied homeland." Palestinian sources disclosed that 'Arafat is expected to arrive in Tunis on 28 December to preside over meetings of the Fatah Central Committee, according to INA.

Egyptian Prime Minister Fu'ad Muhyi ad-Din held talks with a Palestinian delegation in Cairo on the results of 'Arafat's meeting with President Husni Mubarak and on the possibility the PLO may be granted diplomatic status in Cairo early in 1984, Radio Monte Carlo noted.

Samir Gawshah, secretary general of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, said in a statement reported by the Ash-Shariqah paper *AL-KHALIJ* that the Palestinian leaders in Damascus are studying legal and constitutional ways to secure 'Arafat's dismissal as chairman of the PLO Executive Committee.

Egypt

Cairo's *AL-AHRAM* welcomed President Reagan's statement that he no longer considers a solution of the Lebanese crisis necessary before tackling the Middle East peace process, MENA reported. This means the United States has changed its position completely and come to realize that 'Arafat must join the peace process so that the Palestine issue can take precedence over the Lebanese problem, the paper concluded.

Syria

Information Minister Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad died from an incurable disease on 28 December, Damascus radio announced the following morning.

Kuwait

The number of people arrested in connection with the explosions on 12 December has risen to 19, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs 'Abd al-'Aziz Husayn announced in a statement reported by KUNA.

Afghanistan

Afghan rebels marked the fourth anniversary of the Soviet invasion by mounting a series of attacks in and around Kabul, AFP reported citing sources in Islamabad close to the resistance. In another report on the new rebel radio transmitter, Paris radio identified the station as "Radio Free Kabul, the voice of the mujahidin."

Meanwhile, an Iranian Foreign Ministry statement on Afghanistan broadcast by Tehran radio urged rebel groups to work toward "maximum unity" in order to continue the struggle and defeat the Soviet invaders.

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DAILY REPORT

CONTENTS

South Asia

Vol VIII No 250 *28 December 1983*

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW i

AFGHANISTAN

Rally Protests U.S. 'Occupation' of Grenada ..... C 1
U.S. Assisting in Pakistan's Nuclear Program ..... C 1
PRC Support for Counterrevolutionaries Assailed ..... C 2
AFP: Afghan Council To Meet in Rome ..... C 2
Rebel Radio Telephones Paris Station *[AFP]* ..... C 3
Further on Radio *[Paris]* ..... C 3
Mujahidin Attacks on Government Posts Reported ..... C 3
Karachi on Oruzgan Attack ..... C 3
AFP on Raids Near Kabul ..... C 3

BANGLADESH

Union Council Elections Begin 27 December ..... D 1
Tribal Rebels Respond to Amnesty Offer ..... D 1
Sri Lankan Finance, Planning Minister Arrives ..... D 1
Trade, Technical Ties Reviewed ..... D 1

INDIA

Gandhi Chairs Congress-I Deliberations ..... E 1
Political Resolution Discussed ..... E 1
PTI Cited on Plans To Buy More Advanced MIG's ..... E 2
Navy Adds Guided Missile Destroyer 'Ranjit' ..... E 2
Education Protocol Signed With USSR ..... E 3
Pakistan Refuses To Let Pilgrims Visit Shrine ..... E 3
Relatives of Prisoners in Pakistan Appeal to Rao ..... E 3
500 Congress-I, Lok Dal Workers Arrested ..... E 3
'New Mysterious Sikh Organization' Reported ..... E 3
'Extremists' Surrender; Chief Minister Comments ..... E 4
President's Rule in Pondicherry Extended ..... E 4

OTHER COUNTRIES

NEPAL

AFP: Soviet Consignments Held as Possible Contraband ..... G 1

SRI LANKA

Emergency Extended; Premadasa on All-Party Talks ..... G 1
Delhi: TULF Leader Denies Invited to Talks ..... G 1
Tamil Leaders Reportedly To Return 3 January ..... G 2
'Eelam Pirate Radio' Halts Transmission *[DAILY NEWS 13 Dec]* ..... G 2

IRAN

Afghan Occupation Anniversary Commemorated ..... I 1
Foreign Ministry Statement ..... I 1
Refugees' Demonstrations ..... I 1
Musavi: All Superpowers' Plots Pinned to Ground ..... I 1

Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Defense Council Topics ..... I 1
Further Report ..... I 2
IRNA Account ..... I 3
Majlis Speaker Meets With Lebanese Clergyman ..... I 3
Esfahan Friday Imam Addresses Lebanese Shi'ites ..... I 3
Armed Forces Joint Staff Communique No 1,586 ..... I 4
'Conference on Saddam's Crimes' Ends 23 Dec ..... I 4
Tudeh Party Members Trial Continues ..... I 4
Pleas of Guilty ..... I 5
27 December Proceedings ..... I 5
IRNA Account ..... I 5
Television Coverage ..... I 6
NVOI Refutes Charges Against Tudeh Officers ..... I 6
Hashemi-Rafsanjani Hails IRP Success ..... I 7
Montazeri Replies to Letters of Support ..... I 7
TANJUG Cites Paper on Public Discontent *[KEYHAN INTERNATIONAL]* ..... I 7
Khomeyni Receives Mining Minister 25 Dec ..... I 8
New Friday Imam of Khorramshahr Appointed ..... I 8

Rally Protests U.S. 'Occupation' of Grenada
LD260540 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0427 GMT 26 Dec 83

[Text] Kabul, December 25, BAKHTAR — Over 100 thousand people staged today here a mammoth march of protest against the illegal occupation of Grenada by the U.S. imperialism. This march was organized by the Democratic Youth Organisation of Afghanistan (DYOA).

Marchers who included workers, peasants, intellectuals, and other representatives of various strata of the Kabul City population demanded an unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Grenada. They also called upon the White House to stop its provocations against Cuba, Nicaragua and other free nations of Latin America.

The marchers converged before the U.S. Embassy where they were addressed by Farid Mozdak, alternate member of the PDPA CC and first secretary of the Central Committee of DYOA, a representative of workers of Kabul, a representative of young pioneers and others. The speakers voiced the strong condemnation, boundless hatred and disgust of Afghan people against the armed occupation of small and independent Grenada by the Reagan administration under the so-called pretext of restoring order and democracy.

A resolution was passed by the participants of the march which reads in part: The Reagan administration in violation of the most basic international laws, including the provisions of the UN Charter, peoples' right of self-determination and respect to the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of states, has invaded this small country of Caribbean region (Grenada) in a piratic manner. We hereby declare our militant and internationalistic solidarity with the struggle of the people and youth of Grenada for independence, democracy and social progress and with the brave struggle against the US occupants and strongly denounce the reign of terror and strangulation let loose by occupational US troops.

U.S. Assisting in Pakistan's Nuclear Program
LD270722 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Kabul, December 26, BAKHTAR — A political commentator of Pakistan's nuclear programme [views it] with great alarm. The ultimate aim of that programme is to create its own nuclear bomb. This alarm is quite natural, for, the realization (?of) the nuclear ambitions of Ziaul Haq's military regime may seriously upset the strategic balance on the continent and may lead to quite unpredictable consequences (?for) the Asian nations.

Everything began in 1972/1972 [as received] when Abdul Qader Khan, a Pakistani physicist, received Dutch citizenship and got a job with the West European consortium Eurenco. There he received access to classified information on how to make a nuclear explosive device. Three years later he was dismissed, for Khan's activities seemed suspicious to the corsortium management. After returning to his native country, he set about implementing the nuclear programme at a uranium concentrating plant.

To all appearances, he was making headway in his work, for, according to press reports, beginning with 1979 Pakistan began preparations for underground nuclear explosions in the environs of Dalbandin in Baluchistan. Later on intelligence satellites confirmed that tunnels were dug in 1980-1981 in the area of the Ras Kohnqain range, to the south-east of Dalbandin.

In the current year Pakistan has allocated (?from) its budget 493 million rupees for the development of its atomic programme. Out of this sum 403 million rupees have been set aside for building a nuclear fuel regenerating installation and for the construction of a 900 megawatt atomic power station in Chashma. However, it is not stated in the documents of the planning commission how this money was to be distributed between the two projects.

Taking into account the fact that the proposals on the construction of the atomic power station are still in the state of being studied, experts arriving at the natural conclusion that the lion's share of these allocations would be used for building the regenerating installation. Since Pakistan does not possess any plutonium-fuelled nuclear reactors, it is not hard to conclude (?that the plutonium) obtained from the nuclear fuel regenerating installation will be placed at the disposal of people working on the manufacture of nuclear arms.

It is interesting to note that a spokesman of the US administration admitted in one of the Congress sub-committees that the creation of a nuclear fuel regenerating and concentrating instal lation, as well as "other" activities carried on by Pakistan were tantamount to efforts made to create nuclear explosive devices.

It should be noted that the Pakistani Government has alloted another 64 million rupees for geological prospecting work for nuclear-related minerals, and on detailed prospecting for uranium in the Dera Ghazi Khan area.

A number of Western and other countries are helping Islamabad to realize its nuclear programme. Speaking in the house of the people of India's parliament, Indian Defence Minister Venkataraman named among these countries Britain, West Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, Canada, Turkey, the Netherlands, France and others. This aid goes chiefly through secret channels, in circumvention of the laws existing in one or another country. For example, a consignment of zirconium, which is used in building nuclear reactors, was held up in the New York airport. Under American laws export of this metal abroad is prohibited. In Canada the police confiscated a cargoload of US-made electronic equipment used for the production of concentrated Uranium, which was ready for shipment to Pakistan.

Pakistan's military leadership has always displayed interest in the question of nucleae delivery vehicles. One day Islambad tried to conclude a deal with the West European firm Otrag to obtain the necessary technology. But the solution of the problem came from elsewhere — the United States began to supply the military regime with F-16 fighter bombers which are an ideal means of delivering nuclear charges.

After it granted Pakistan 3,200 million dollars worth of military and economic aid, Washington radically revised its attitude tolslamabad's nuclear ambitions. According to US Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, it is vitally important for America that the Pakistani nuclear bomb should be in the hands of a "friendly government". Connivance with Ziaul Haq's nuclear ambitions may bring Asia to the brink of a catastrophe.

PRC Support for Counterrevolutionaries Assailed

LD280010 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Text] The BAKHTAR commentator writes the following concerning Beijing's hegemonist and adventurous policy, taking advantage of the world's present situation, especially events surrounding Afghanistan:

With the victory of the Sawr revolution in Afghanistan, in particular after the new development stage of the revolution, reaction and international imperialism lost interest in the DRA. Furthermore, hegemonist China could not implement its hollow and absurd thoughts. As its efforts ended in failure, it took a stand against the Sawr revolution and the people of Afghanistan. It mobilized counterrevolutionaries with Chinese-made weapons and sent its instructors to Pakistan to train the bandits. In order to interfere in Afghanistan's revolution and in its new life, it seized every deception and spread all kinds of fabrications.

Hegemonist China stood on the side of imperialism and reaction in their wide-scale propaganda work against the revolutionary transformations in Afghanistan. Out of its hostility toward the Sawr revolution, it united with Washington and Islamabad and formed a triangle. The PRC foreign minister, during his visit in July 1983, not only approved increasing the interference of the Islamabad militarist regime in the internal affairs of the DRA, but openly visited the camps of the counterrevolutionaries in Pakistan and once again gave assurances of continued Chinese military assistance for the sold-out elements.

What follows from the present policy of the Chinese hegemonists is that Beijing is striving on a broad scale to fan up the undeclared war against the DRA and follow the policy of the United States to further increase tension in southern Asia. The stand of chauvinist China internationally is also to pursue the military policy of the Reagan administration.

The hegemonists of China, despite providing more than $2.5 billion of military assistance to Pakistan and transforming this country into arsenal of Chinese-made weapons, have built the strategic Qaraqorum highway in order to start a military operation against India. It has occupied more than 20,000 square kilometers of that country's territory.

China has launched an undeclared war against the heroic people of Vietnam, whose active struggle against the U.S. aggressors is being printed in history [word indistinct].

The Chinese chauvinists never want the situation in Soe:theast Asia to reach the stage of reciprocal cooperation and tranquillity based on equality and equal security. Hegemonists interfere in the affairs of Indochinese countries as do member states of the ASEAN. They have sided in favor of ASEAN countries against Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea. The leaders of Beijing have supported the provisional government of Prince Sihanouk in order to oppose the revolutionary transformations in Kampuchea. [words indistinct]

Revolutionary transformations in Mongolia for the construction of a new socialist society in solidarity with its internationalist friends have caused concern in Beijing.

The Chinese hegemonists have begun broad and all-round cooperation with the racist regime of South Africa.

The political atmosphere in Beijing and the nature of its foreign policy indicate that the hegemonists of China take sides with U.S. imperialism and [words indistinct] in every corner of the world where aggression and conspiracy and trampling on the interests of millions of toilers are contemplated. Imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism, Chinese hegemonism, and international reaction must realize that the struggling masses of the world, among them the revolutionary and toiling people of Afghanistan who are striving to follow the revolutionary path, are aware of these conspiracies and in a practical manner have stood and will stand against such intimidation and aggression, which in fact tramples on the legitimate rights of the peace-loving people of the world.

Imperialism and chauvinism can no longer create obstacles on the way of those masses who are fighting without fear for the world's peace and security. [words indistinct] All conspiracies by hegemonist China against the people and national and democratic revolution of Afghanistan are doomed to defeat and failure.

AFP: Afghan Council To Meet in Rome

NC282120 Paris AFP in English 2108 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Rome, Dec 27 (AFP) — The Afghan Council, parliament of traditional Afghan leaders, will meet in exile early next year to approve the unification of the resistance, Rasul Zalmai, representative of the Afghan resistance in Europe, told a press conference here today. Mr. Zalmai said the council, traditional meeting of some 500 leaders for more than 1,000 years, would meet probably in Peshawar, Pakistan or in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Zalmai said more than 80 percent of Afghans favoured the summoning of the council, which will elect a unified command of all resistance groups. Three resistance groups, all Islamic fundamentalists, had not yet given their backing. Efforts were continuing to convince them to change their position, said Mr. Zalmai.

The last meeting of the Afghan Council was in the 1950's when Afghanistan decided to join the non-aligned movement.

The decision to call a meeting of the council was taken during a conference here in July of the main resistance movements and ex-king of Afghanistan Mohammad Zaher Shah, exiled in Italy for several years. In a message read out at the press conference the ex-king said since the Soviet invasion four years ago the

conflict had "resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of our countrymen, the flight of more than four million seeking refuge abroad and the destitution of millions more inside the country as well as the destruction of most cities and villages." A united front would give the resistance a single voice to which "the free world can listen", he said.

Meanwhile on the fourth anniversary of the Soviet invasion today anti-Soviet demonstrations were held in a number of cities including Rome, Paris and Bonn.

Rebel Radio Telephones Paris Station

NC2720O9 Paris AFP in English 1946 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Paris, Dec 27 (AFP) — The Afghan rebels' free Mujahedeen radio, which began broadcasting in Afghanistan on Christmas Day, was heard here today thanks to a special telephone link-up with the French free radio station Gilda. A French radio journalist took part in the broadcast from a secret location in a mountainous region close to Kabul, Radio Gilda said.

A resistance leader said on the air that the rebels would protect the radio as they had protected "country and [words indistinct] since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

A former official of Afghan Radio said he had left his job after the Soviet invasion, and had been working over the past two years to set up the clandestine radio station, located at an altitude of 3,500 meters (11,500 ft).

Further on Radio

LD272154 Paris Domestic Service in French 1800 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Excerpt] The Afghan rebels have had a new weapon, the radio, for the past 2 days. They have installed a transmitter in the heart of the mountains with the assistance of a French technician from Radio Gilda. The first broadcast of Radio Free Kabul went out on Sunday. It was picked up throughout the country and even in Pakistan: a denunciation of the occupation and an appeal for resistance. Here is an eye-witness report by the French technician who fitted the transmitter, Bruno Babiche. He recounts his adventure:

[Begin Babiche recording] It is 0510. I am at an altitude of 2,500 meters somehwere in the mountains of the northern region of the country not very far from Kabul. The entire technical capacities of Radio Free Kabul have been mobilized. The working conditions of this team are frightful. They put up their aerials in between 1.5 and 2 meters of snow and work at night to avoid Soviet bombardment. Of course, a large group of armed men protect the station and it also enjoys the protection of groups of local rebels. Badly dressed, wearing sandals, they live, eat, and sleep in the snow. Imagine a team from a French independent radio station broadcasting in midwinter from the top of Mont Blanc. [End recording, followed by Dari callsign: "Here is Kabul, the voice of Afghanistan's mujahidin."]

What you are hearing at this moment is the callsign of Radio Free Kabul, the voice of the mujahidin, a voice which the Soviets will have a lot of trouble silencing.

Mujahidin Attacks on Government Posts Reported

Karachi on Oruzgan Attack

BK261020 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 26 Dec 83

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say the Afghan mujahidin launched an attack on a military convoy in Dehravud subdivision of Oruzgan Province. They damaged some tanks and armored personnel carriers. A number of Soviet-Karmal troops were killed or injured.

AFP on Raids Near Kabul

BK271447 Hong Kong AFP in English 1423 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 27 (AFP) — Afghan rebels last week mounted a series of attacks in and around Kabul to mark the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, sources close the resistance said today. About 100 Moslem rebel troops armed with rocket launchers and mortars attacked a military academy and infantry barracks in Pol-e-Charkhi, outside Kabul, according to the AFGHAN ISLAMIC NEWS AGENCY based in the northern Pakistani town of Peshawar. Other rebels shelled the government radio station, a residential area for Soviet advisers and high-ranking government officials, a hotel and bank in Kabul, the agency said.

A total of 13 persons were said to have been killed in the December 22 attacks, which were followed by government retaliation raids over three villages southeast of the capital.

In the southern town of Qandahar, 11 Rebel units infiltrated an army barracks, engaging government forces in a several-hour long battle in which a dozen rebels and scores of Soviet and Afghan troops were killed. Qandahar was been surrounded earlier this month by Soviet soldiers who rounded up hundreds of civilians in a bid to prevent a major rebel attack marking the fourth anniversary of the Soviet invasion.

Reliable sources in Peshawar said rebel forces had been preparing attacks in several Afghan cities but were forced to cut back their plans for lack of arms.

(In Paris, a message dated December 5 from a resistance chief in central Afghanistan arrived at AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE today, calling for French support of rebel efforts to oust Soviet troops from the country.

(The holiday message was carried on foot through combat zones to the Pakistan border and posted to France from Peshawar.)

Union Council Elections Begin 27 December

BK271415 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] The process of transition to democracy got under way in the country today with the beginning of the Union Parishad [Council] elections. At the opening day today, polling began at 0800 in the morning and continued till 1700 in the afternoon. Over 40 million voters will elect 4,400 chairmen and 39,600 members for the 4,400 Union Councils in the country during the 15-day-long elections.

This year, 21,477 candidates [passage indistinct]. Large numbers of voters lined up before the polling booths [words indistincts]. It may be recalled the chief election commissioner, Mr Justice S.M. Nurul Islam, had announced the election schedule on the 7th of October last in a nationwide address over radio and television. The process of elections started on the 14th of last month with the filing of nomination papers which were scrutinized on the following day. The last date for the withdrawal of candidature was the 20th of last month.

Tribal Rebels Respond to Amnesty Offer

BK240858 Hong Kong AFP in English 0806 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 24 (AFP) — The government has announced the names of 54 tribal rebels of the "Shanti Bahini," a group fighting for increased autonomy in the hilly southeastern district of Chittagong, who have surrendered in recent weeks in response to a government amnesty. The pardon for the "misguided" insurgents was declared last October by military ruler Lieutenant-General Hussain Mohammad Ershad in the wake of growing internal disputes among Shanti Bahini factions.

The insurgents, with an estimated 3,000 members under arms, began battling government security forces in the late 1970's to press demands for increased autonomy for their tribal lands, which they said were being violated by officially sanctioned immigration from neighboring plains areas. The group was led by former member of parliament Manabendra Narayan Larma, who was reportedly killed last month across the border in India during a fight with a breakaway faction of his group.

A Defence Ministry announcement late yesterday said the 54 rebels who surrendered included seven officers of the so-called Bahini. A considerable quantity of arms and ammunition was also handed over to the government, it said.

The amnesty, which is valid until February 25, provides for social and economic rehabilitation for the surrendering rebels.

Sri Lankan Finance, Planning Minister Arrives

BK261109 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 26 Dec 83

[Text] The Sri Lankan minister for finance and planning, Mr Ronnie de Mel, arrived in Dhaka last night on a 10-day official visit to Bangladesh. He was received at the Zia International Airport by his Bangladesh counterpart, Mr A.M.A. Muhith. During his stay, Mr de Mel will discuss matters related to bilateral economic cooperation with Bangladesh minister for finance and planning. He will also call on the president and the chief martial law administrator, Lieutenant General H.M. Ershad, the deputy chief martial law administrators, and the ministers for foreign affairs, industries and commerce, and agriculture. Besides, he will visit the export processing zone in Chittagong, tea research institute at Srimangal in Sylhet, and dry fish processing center in Khulna.

Trade, Technical Ties Reviewed

BK270734 Dhaka BSS in English 0635 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 27, BSS — Bangladesh and Sri Lanka on Monday reviewed the entire gamut of economic, trade and technical relations between the two countries at a ministerial level meeting.

Talks were held between the visiting Sri Lankan finance and planning minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, and his Bangladesh counterpart, Mr A.M.A. Muhith, within the framework of the existing economic, technical, shipping and general agreements between the two countries.

A spokesman of the Bangladesh Government briefing BSS said that since the signing of the general agreement between the two countries in 1977, the volume of trade was so far very small but observed that there was good prospect for expansion of the bilateral trade.

Sri Lanka expressed interest in buying jute bags, carpets, new prints, dry fish and hard and particle boards from Bangladesh.

Establishment of a joint chamber of commerce and greater cooperation between the state trading corporations of the two countries also came up for discussions during the meeting.

The Sri Lankan minister, Mr de Mel, is now on a ten-day visit to Bangladesh aimed at stepping up bilateral economic relations.

Gandhi Chairs Congress-I Deliberations

BK271645 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Excerpts] The Congress-I Working Committee began its deliberations in Surendra Nagar at Calcutta this afternoon. It has taken up for discussion the draft resolutions on political, economic, and international situation. The party president, Mrs Gandhi, is in chair.

Earlier, Mrs Gandhi lighted the Shaheed Jyoti [martyrs torch] at the foot of the statue of Martyr Khudiram Bose, opposite the venue of the 77th plenary session of the party. Speaking on the occasion, she said unity is absolutely necessary for the preservation of freedom and making the country stronger. She urged the people, particularly the youth, to work unitedly for the country's progress and national integration. Mrs Gandhi recalled the role played by freedom fighters and said the country is indebted to them for their great sacrifices and devotion. Mrs Gandhi received the torch symbolizing martyrdom from Mr Priyaranjan Das Munshi.

Mrs Gandhi was given a warm welcome when she arrived at the Calcutta airport earlier in the day. Talking to newsmen, Mrs Gandhi said she has received a letter from the president of the UN General Assembly inviting her for talks with the Soviet and the U.S. heads of state to revive detente and halt the arms race in her capacity as the chairperson of the Nonaligned Movement. She said the letter is under consideration.

Mrs Gandhi was greeted by thousands of people as her motorcade went through the 18-km route from the airport to the venue of the session. The All-India Congress Committee-I general secretary, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, also received a warm welcome when he arrived by a special train this morning.

Political Resolution Discussed

BK280959 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 28 Dec 83

[Text] At Surendranagar in Calcutta, the subjects committee of the Congress-I has begun a discussion on the political resolution. It was moved by Mr Jagannath Pahadia and seconded by Mr N.M. Jecob.

The resolution urges all patriotic forces to join in the preservation of unity and integrity of the country, whose existence as a nation is being threatened. It speaks of the relentless struggle of the party for communal harmony and secularism and firm conviction about national consensus on issues like unity, secularism, planning, self-reliance, nonalignment, and world peace.

The resolution criticizes the role of the opposition parties, particularly the rightist parties, for the failure to comprehend the real danger to the country's unity and stability. It also refers to the recent unfortunate developments in the country, like violence and hatred, as perpetuated by a small section in Punjab, extremist violence in Assam, and flouting of democratic canons in Jammu and Kashmir.

The resolution speaks of the reactionary nature of the Bharatiya Janata Party-Lok Dal alliance, which, it says, threatens the country's democratic and secular life. It regrets that leftist parties have failed to appreciate the dynamics of social and political change within the framework of our democratic system.

The resolution also says that a strong center is essential for the preservation of the country's unity and integrity.

Addressing the subjects committee, Mrs Gandhi called upon the people to work for unity among different sections of society. She regretted that some opposition parties ignored the national problems and tried to project the regional issues to disintegrate the country for achieving the political ends.

Mrs Gandhi said India believes in democracy but democracy involves solution to our problems through socialism where there is equality of opportunity for all. India, she said, always stands for utilization of resources for the economic development of the people. Our basic aim is to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, and job opportunities to all. She said one of the greatest contributions of the Congress Party is that it got the country united. The need of the hour is to work for national unity in the same spirit as we fought for freedom.

Tracing the history of the party, Mrs Gandhi said the Congress grew not just as a political party but more as a mass movement. This has its strength as well as weakness. There was division in the party in differences of opinion on several issues. She said several persons and groups left the party on account of this. Despite this, the party continues to grow, she said.

Earlier, hoisting the party flag, Mrs Gandhi said the Congress-I had service as its motto right from its inception. She said sometimes we commit mistakes but we should admit our faults and try to come back to the right path.

Mrs Gandhi said the session is being held to commemmorate the founding of the Indian National Congress about a century ago and consider the present situation in the country and chalk out new programs for the future. She referred to the sacrifices made by leaders of Bengal during the freedom movement and said the nation should take inspiration from them.

Mrs Gandhi asked party workers to spread Gandhiji's message of national unity, communal harmony, and friendship in very village.

The draft resolution on the international situation to be discussed by the plenary session of the Congress-I calls upon the great powers to resume a serious and purposeful discussion by removing the nuclear threat to humanity. It says the present crisis can be solved if the great powers give up the concept that the only way to preserve peace is to prepare for war.

The resolution refers to serveral initiatives taken by Mrs Gandhi as chairperson of the Nonaligned Movement to promote world peace. It points out that the cause for peace is inextricably linked with the ending of hunger. Unfortunately, the present economic

order based on unequal relations between the developed and developing nations upsets the process of progress. Efforts for its reform and restructuring have so far produced negligible results.

The All-India Congress Committee-I supports the measures taken by the prime minister to create among the leading industrial nations an awareness for a change of the political and economic policies. Though we have a long way to go, enduring results can be produced only through dialogue and caution. In this context, it refers to the recent meeting of the Commonwealth heads of government and describes it as a useful exercise in trying to narrow the gap between the North and the South.

Refeering to the developments in Pakistan, the resolution says these continued to cause profound concern to us. It urges all patriotic forces in the country to realize the threat being posed to India's security by large-scale induction into Pakistan of a vast arsenal of sophisticated weaponry with tremendous destructive power.

On Sri Lanka, the resolution welcomes Mrs Gandhi's handling of the delicate problem of the people of Indian origin in that country. It hopes that the national dialogue in Sri Lanka will be conducted in a constructive spirit to find a lasting solution to the problem.

The resolution reiterates the support to Namibia's independnece. Expressing concern over the situation in West Asia, the resolution says the effort to undermine the unity of the PLO cannot but cause dismay in the minds of the Arabs.

On Afghanistan, it reaffirms the Congress-I support to the United Nations in its efforts to arrive at a political settlement.

The Congress-I has reiterated its commitment to the building of a self-reliant economy on the basis of modern science and technology. The draft economic resolution to be discussed at the plenary session reaffirms the party's faith in the socialist path.

PTI Cited on Plans To Buy More Advanced MIG's

BK271435 Hong Kong AFP in English 1358 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 27 [AFP] — India is considering buying more advanced Soviet MIG 29/31 fighter jets to beef up its defence preparedness in response to U.S. arms sales to Pakistan, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported today.

In an year-end review of defence preparedness, PTI noted India's efforts towards greater military self-reliance under a six-year plan ending 1985.

Under the plan, India acquires newer, more sophisticated weapons from abroad and produces arms at home.

Defence experts said that India's preparations were in proportion to the changing situation in the region — particularly Pakistan, in view of U.S. arms sales to that country, but also in the Indian Ocean, the Iran-Iraq conflict and mounting East-West tensions.

These international developments could escalate any day to wars by proxy, the experts believed.

India is budgeted to spend 59,710 million rupees (about 59 billion dollars) this financial year, ending in March, on defence. This "impressive" budget was needed to match the arms buildup in Pakistan from the U.S. supplies, PTI said.

All three armed forces have improved under the 1980-85 defence plan.

India has now finalised deals with the Soviet Union to purchase AN-32 transport aircraft and MIG-27 interceptors for its air force.

The authorities were also considering acquiring more advanced MIG 29/31 versions, PTI said.

India has contracted with France to buy Mirage-2000's while the Anglo-French deep penetration strike Jaguar aircraft have already joined the air force.

The country's proudest defence achievement was the recent commissioning of the first totally India-built frigate, the 3,500-tonne *Godavari*, perhaps the only warship in the world with two helicopters for surveillance and anti-submarine warfare, PTI said.

India also launched its first-home built multipurpose offshore patrol vessel this year — the first of six such vessels now under construction.

Other important achievements on the naval front included the signing of a deal with Britain to buy Sea eagle surface-skimming missiles to match Pakistan's Harpoon missiles, the introduction of Harrier jumpjets for India's sole aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, and the agreement to acquire the latest Sea king Mark-4 helicopters.

Important acquisitions for the army include the introduction of BNP-1 infantry combat vehicles, T-72 tanks bridging equipment, Chilka air defence systems, SAM-6 and Milan missiles.

Navy Adds Guided Missile Destroyer 'Ranjit'

BK271025 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] *INS Ranjit*, the guided missile destroyer, joined the Indian Navy today. The ship is fitted with long-range, surface-to-surface, and surface-to-air missiles and also carries an antisubmarine helicopter onboard. Two such ships, *INS Rajput* and *INS Rana*, have already joined the fleet.

Education Protocol Signed With USSR

BK251029 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Text] India and the Soviet Union have signed a protocol on the decision taken in the meeting of the joint Indo-Soviet textbook board. A five-member Soviet delegation, led by the deputy minister of higher and specialized secondary education, visited India under the cultural and educational exchange program concluded in May this year. During the talks, the group recommended the possibilities of exploring joint authorship between Indian and Soviet scholars in tarnslation and adaptation of books.

Pakistan Refuses To Let Pilgrims Visit Shrine

BK241447 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Text] Pakistan has refused permission to Indian pilgrims to visit the shrine of (Hayat Patafi) at Sukkur in Sind and Rabwah in Jhang District of west Punjab. About 200 Indian pilgrims were planning to go to Sukkur as has been the practice since 1979. A group of Indian pilgrims belonging to the Ahmedya community wanted to go to Rabwah to attend a religious conference being held next week. An official spokesman said in New Delhi that the Pakistan Government has given no reason for declining permission to the two groups of pilgrims.

Relatives of Prisoners in Pakistan Appeal to Rao

BK241641 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Text] A group of relatives of Indian prisoners were allowed to meet only a few prisoners during their visit to Pakistan in September. They have reported this to the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao. They said they were allowed only a brief meeting.

According to the lists exchanged between the two countries, there are more than 350 Indian prisoners in Pakistan, including defense personnel. These prisoners had completed their sentences and were in any case ready for repatriation. Mr Narasimha Rao has directed the Indian ambassador in Islamabad, Mr K.D. Sharma, to take up the issue with the Pakistan Government so that the relatives can go there again and identify the prisoners or get more information about their condition.

500 Congress-I, Lok Dal Workers Arrested

BK271619 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the Congress-I and Lok Dal leaders have said that about 500 of their workers were arrested by police at Bishnah, about 20 km from Jammu today where they were demonstrating against the policies of the state government. The deputy leader of the Congress-I legislature party, Mr Rangil Singh, told newsmen in Jammu this evening that about 50 Congress-I workers were injured in police lathi [baton] charge. The chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, addressed a public meeting at Bishnah. Official sources in Jammu have denied that any lathi charge was made. An official spokesman told our correspondent that police have arrested 20 Congress-I and Lok Dal workers who tried to disturb the public meeting of the chief minister. Police used some tear gas shells.

'New Mysterious Sikh Organization' Reported

BK231135 Hong Kong AFP in English 0902 GMT 23 Dec 83

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 23 (AFP) — Babbar Khalsa, a new and mysterious Sikh organisation, has claimed responsibility for 35 recent murders in violence-wracked Punjab and has said it will continue the killings to purify Sikhism.

Babbar Khalsa has about 100 "young armed fanatics" living in a wing of the Golden Temple of Amritsar — the sacred Sikh base in northwestern Punjab bordering Pakistan, special correspondents from New Delhi's press said today.

They have two declared adversaries. The first are the partisans of Bhindranwale, a Sikh religious figure, whom Indian commentators also consider a fanatical partisan of Punjabi independence. Bhindranwale is protected by about 1,000 armed guards entrenched in another wing of the Golden Temple, which is off-limits to police.

The factions have been on the verge of confrontation since last week when the Babbar Khalsa seized an area which until then had been occupied by the Bhindranwale group.

After four hours of talks, the Bhindranwale Sikhs abandoned the territory to "avoid a bloodbath in the temple."

The Babbar Khalsa's other adversaries are the Nirankaris, a liberal Sikh sect which, according to its leaders, has 8 million members in Punjab, New Delhi, the United States, Canada and Britain.

There are 8 million orthodox Sikhs, split into two groups — those who back getting autonomy through negotiations and those that want to use any method, including violence, to get independence for Punjab. Police believe that this latter group constitutes a small minority.

In 18 months a total of 35 Nirankaris have been murdered, usually shot at point-blank range by young killers monted on motorcycles.

Police were puzzling over the political allegiances of these killers until yesterday, when a poster was stuck up on a wall of the Golden Temple. It called for the "liquidation of the impure" and announced that "the purges will continue."

Press commentators here held that the Babbar Khalsa, whose leaders are unknown, have thus announced their aim of taking over the leadership of the Sikh activist movement which, up to now, has been spearheaded by the Bhindranwale group.

Some press reports have maintained that the founder of the Babbar Khalsa group, Talwinder Singh, is detained in West

Germany and that India seeks his extradition charging that he has been an accomplice in several murders.

Other reports said he has left West Germany and was sought by Interpol.

Over the past three years, the violence in Punjab, India's main grain-producing area, has claimed 547 lives and caused damage estimated at 260,000 dollars worth of material damage, officials said, adding that 27 banks have been robbed in the past 18 months.

In New Delhi this year, six people have been killed and 56 injured in fights between Sikhs.

Observers held that, in the long run, the Akali Dal party and its leader Sant Harchand Singh Longowal will benefit most from the situation.

Moderate Sikhs, who support autonomy for Punjab within the Indian union and who are weary of the violence, are turning increasingly to the Akali Dal.

The central government could also benefit as under its strategy, it has considered Mr. Longowal as the most valid interlocutor.

'Extremists' Surrender; Chief Minister Comments

BK231637 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Dec 83

[Text] In Assam, three extremists along with arms surrendered before the chief minister, Mr Hiteshwar Saikia, in Gauhauti today. According to an official release, the three extremists belonged to Dibrugarh District. Later, the chief minister told newsmen that several other youths involved in such activities have communicated their desire to surrender before the authorities and lead a normal life.

President's Rule in Pondicherry Extended

BK231245 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Dec 83

[Text] The 6-month-long president's rule in the union territory of Pondicherry, which is scheduled to end tomorrow, has been extended by another 6 months. A notification issued in New Delhi today says that the situation in the union territory of Pondicherry continues to be such that the ad inistration of the territory cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Government of Union Territories Act.

NEPAL

AFP: Soviet Consignments Held as Possible Contraband

BK261548 Hong Kong AFP in English 1346 GMT 26 Dec 83

[Text] Katmandu, Dec 26 (AFP) — Nepalese customs officers have held three large consignments shipped from Hong Kong in the name of the Soviet Embassy here on the suspicion that they contain contraband goods, officials said today.

Customs officiers in Birgunj, 260 km (160 miles) south of here, summoned a Soviet Embassy representative when they suspected irregularities in the duty exemption certificate issued by the Foreign Ministry.

However, the Soviet diplomat disowned the consignments, shipped via Calcutta, saying his embassy had never ordered them.

Customs authorities have opened an investigation into the case, but have not yet revealed the nature of the goods.

A consignment of 84 crates of electronic goods for the Soviet Embassy last year caused a controversy in the National Panchayat (Parliament) when it was cleared through customs without being checked.

SRI LANKA

Emergency Extended; Premadasa on All-Party Talks

BK241244 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Text] The Parliament last night extended the emergency for a further month; (?129) voted for the motion and none against. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna MP's abstained from voting. The MP for (Kalegama) was not present in the house during voting time.

Winding up the debate, Prime Minister R. Premadasa said that the government was willing to see that all parties attended the roundtable conference. The two parties banned are not politically a threat to the government, but investigations are now on to find out whether these two parties had been a threat to the government security-wise. Though it was possible for the leaders of these two parties to make a statement without going into hiding, if they make a statement to security forces, a decision could be taken to lift the ban on (?two) communist parties after the completion of investigation. The government is not at all willing to maintain a ban on the parties unnecessarily. There is opportunity to hold any meeting that would not be an obstacle to peace in the country. Protection of the people and peace should be consolidated.

Mr Premadasa pointed out that eight political parties have agreed to desist from saying or doing anything which would be unhelpful to the present situation until the end of the all-party discussions. But in this regard it is necessary to continue the state of emergency.

The prime minister explained at length why the government decided not to hold talks with those who were attempting to divide the country. But it was the opinion of the other parties that the Tamil United Liberation Front should participate in the discussions. As a result, it was decided to invite that party to the conference to maintain unity, peace, and development in the country. Stressing that the government would not give an opportunity for the division of the country, the prime minister pointed out that we should all get together to completely wipe out terrorism from the country. However, terrorism has become a great threat to the government of the Indian prime minister, Mrs Gandhi. Terrorism began in the country during the period of the last (?regime). Nobody can be blamed for this. Terrorists cannot carry on their activities without the help of outsiders. Mr Premadasa said that there was evidence that they were receiving support and aid from foreign sources.

Presenting the motion, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Sports Vincent Perera pointed out the need to implement further the provisions of the public security ordinance to maintain law and order. Referring to breach of peace in Jaffna, Batticaloa, Balawatta, and Bambalapitiya areas, prime minister said that Rehabilitation of Property and Industries Authority would be made a department shortly.

The leader of the opposition, Anura Bandaranaike, expressed his belief that the Indian prime minister would not interfere in our country's internal affairs. This was clear following a statement made by Mrs Gandhi at Madras recently. He said that he was ashamed of the statement made by Mr Amirthalingam, who was the former leader of the opposition, at Madras on Mrs Gandhi's statement. Mr Amirthalingam had stated that there was a right for a country to interfere in activities of another. Mr Bandaranaike said that Mr Amirthalingam should understand that the problems faced by him in controlling his extremists are similar to those faced by every party. However, Mr Bandaranaike pointed out that it was clear from his statement that Mr Amirthalingam does not want a just solution to the present problem. Therefore, the government's attention should be focused on his statements.

Urging Mr Amirthalingam to assist in finding a solution, Mr Bandaranaike recalled that the president had already assured complete safety for him. The opposition leader added that it was the terrorists in north who had tried to harm (?him) and not in Colombo.

Delhi: TULF Leader Denies Invited to Talks

BK251558 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Text] The Tamil United Liberation Front [TULF] has not yet received any invitation from the Sri Lanka president, Mr Jayewardene, for the proposed roundtable conference to solve the ethnic problem in the island. Talking to newsmen in Madras today, the TULF secretary general, Mr Amirthalingam, said the TULF will decide on its participation after it receives the invitation.

Tamil Leaders Reportedly To Return 3 January

BK271215 Hong Kong AFP in English 1006 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Colombo, Dec 27 (AFP) — An envoy of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress is in India to prepare for an all-party conference on Sri Lanka's ethnic tensions, sources said here today.

In another move to promote reconciliation, the government of President Junius Jayewardene was reportedly ready to lift a ban on two small parties imposed following the July riots that left nearly 400 people dead and 100,000 homeless.

Representatives of some of Sri Lanka's major political parties, including the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), are due to meet January 10 in a bid to smooth relations between the majority Sinhalas and minority Tamils.

Sources here said that Motilal Nehru, vice president of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress, has gone to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu to hear the views of local leaders and representatives of Sri Lankan Tamil youth groups. They said that Mr Nehru would be trying to impress on leader of the separatist TULF the need to involve the youth and to convene a roundtable of all Tamil interests.

TULF Secretary General Appapillai Amirthalingam and another TULF leader, M. Sivasithamparam, were expected in Colombo on January 3, the evening *OBSERVER* reported.

TULF sources are reported to have said that the TULF leaders arriving from Madras would head directly for Colombo, instead of going to Jaffna in the north of Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, the *SUN* newspaper reported that the five-month ban on the People's Liberation Front (JVP) and the New Socialist Party (NSSP) was expected to be lifted this week.

The newspaper said the move would be made in order to invite the two parties to join the roundtable conference, expected to shift the focus of the ethnic situation back to Colombo after efforts by India to ease tensions.

The Indian high commissioner here, S.' S. Chatwal, had a 45-minute meeting with Mr Jayewardene on Friday and said afterward their discussions included "India's continued good offices in solving Sri Lanka's ethnic problem."

In another development, a proclamation has been issued fixing January 19 as the date for nominations for 12 by-elections in the north, including contests for 11 parliamentary seats lost by the TULF when it faled to take an oath disavowing separatism.

One seat was vacated by a legislator because of ill health.

'Eelam Pirate Radio' Halts Transmission

BK221720 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 13 Dec 83 p 1

[Text] The Eelam pirate radio which has been coming on the air for some time has closed down transmissions for what it called "unavoidable reasons."

The twice weekly one-hour shortwave transmission was believed to originate in India, but the Indian authorities have ruled this out. The feeling now is that the broadcast was beamed off a powerful shipboard transmitter.

The authorities here said this is possible and the closedown of the broadcast may be due to the host ship sailing away.

Afghan Occupation Anniversary Commemorated

Foreign Ministry Statement

LD271231 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] The following statement was issued by the Islamic Republic Foreign Ministry in connection with the anniversary of the occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops:

On 27 December, 4 years ago, the occupying Soviet troops, having invaded the Islamic Afghan territory and trampled upon international principles and laws, made more obvious their arrogant and aggressive coveting of the Islamic nation. By its military aggression on Afghanistan, shedding the blood of hundreds of thousands of Muslim women, men, and children and making homeless millions of others, the Soviet Union revealed the nature of its deceptive motto concerning its defense of the masses and, by continuing its occupation of this Islamic land, made it possible for U.S. imperialism to expand its influence in the region and to strengthen its sphere of domination against the Islamic Revolution and the struggles by the region's Muslim nations for independence and freedom. The sphere of U.S. [word indistinct] by this aggression and its consequences went beyond the region and as a pretext to justify the so-called policy of containing communism it was also applied in Africa and Latin America.

Today, the Soviet Union is trapped in a self-created quagmire in Afghanistan with the Afghan Muslim revolutionaries defending Islamic uprising and inflicting more and more (?casualties) on the enemy through their unity of action and word.

While expressing its decisive support for the legitimate and genuine struggles of the Muslim Afghan nation, the Islamic Republic of Iran stresses: Reliance on the liberating Islamic tenet and prevention of influence of deviationist ideologies are the only way for victory of the Muslim Afghan nation. Efforts toward maximum unity among groups and Muslim Afghan forces are a factor contributing toward continuation of the struggle and a guarantee for a speedy victory over the aggressors. Vigilance by the Muslim Afghan nation against suspicious moves and plots by the enemy to sow discord through his internal agents, as well as prevention of any other arrogant interferences in Afghanistan, will be a determining factor in achieving a final victory.

While [word indistinct] and condemning the continuation of the presence of the Soviet occupying forces in Afghanistan, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses the hope that the Muslim people of that country will be able to revive the Islamic character of their country and take a longer stride toward the unity of Islamic nation in the world through unity and cohesive struggle in the path of God and through decisive confrontation against Eastern and Western greed.

Refugees' Demonstrations

GF271624 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 27, IRNA — Afghan Muslims residing in Iran held protest marches in various cities marking the fourth anniversary of the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan.

The demonstrators condemned the Soviet action and set flags of the Soviet Union and effigies of Babrak Karmal of Afghanistan on fire.

In Tehran the demonstrators gathered in a square in the centre of the town and condemned satanic powers of East and West and called for overthrow of the illegal government of Karmal and establishment of an Islamic republic in Afghanistan.

A 13 point resolution was issued at the end of the march here, calling for unconditional withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and payment of reparations for the damages caused to Afghanistan.

The resolution further added that the Afghan Muslim Mujahidin would continue their struggle against the Soviet backed regime of Karmal until liberation of Afghanistan and withdrawal of occupying Soviet forces. It also rejected any political solution to the Afghan crisis and stressed that the only path to victory was continuation of the armed struggle.

In another part of the resolution direct and indirect interference of superpowers in the affairs of the world Muslims was deplored and the withdrawal of the interventionist forces from Lebanon was called for.

It also deserves notice that since Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, some 1.8 million Afghans have fled to Iran.

Musavi: All Superpowers' Plots Pinned to Ground

GF271630 Tehran IRNA in English 1600 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 27, IRNA — The superpowers plots against the Islamic revolution confirmed the justness and legality of the revolution which is opposed to their interests, said Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi here today. Addressing a group of officials and people of Maragheh, in East Azarbayjan Province, Musavi said Islam was not in conformity with the desires of the U.S. nor the U.S.S.R., and neither does it serve the interests of a few who in the past regime held large interests. Thus, he said, this is the reason of the countless plots against the Islamic revolution of Iran.

In another part of his address, Prime Minister Musavi said that the awareness and vigilance of the people thwarted and defeated all anti-revolutionary plots, and because of the enthusiasm and consciousness among the people of Iran till now all the plots of superpowers and their lackeys have been pinned to the ground.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Defense Council Topics

GF270920 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Interview with Hashemi-Rafsanjani, imam's representative to Supreme Defense Council, by unidentified Voice and Vision correspondent in Tehran on 26 December — recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Please tell our listeners about the results of the Supreme Defense Council meeting.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. We discussed many subjects during a long meeting including the war fronts and future actions. We also discussed the situation in the Persian Gulf and the Hormuz Strait.

Naval advisers were present and their state of readiness was discussed. We also discussed matters connected with the army, logistics, [word indistinct], and the purchases we need to make. Our position is stronger than it was some 40 months ago at the beginning of the war.

[Correspondent] There have been developments and events during the past week in the region. One of them was the departure of Yasir 'Arafat and his party. What effect will this development have on the people of Palestine?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] As you are aware, our relations with the Palestinians are not new. What is important is that the Palestinians must remain united and their unity should remain ready for jihad against Israel.

Today, if they no longer remain united, it would be a calamity and if they remain united but do not fight against Israel, this would be another sad event. (?Earlier, the position was such that the Palestinians had the initiative and on several occasions were fighting on Israeli territory.)

[Correspondent] Recently developments have taken place in Lebanon such as the visit of Rumsfeld and his meeting with Saddam. Similarly, the U.S. inclination to renew diplomatic relations with Iraq has also surfaced. What is your opinion regarding these developments?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] This is nothing new. The Foreign Ministry has commented on this matter and I have also expressed my opinion. The situation created by the Western allies which believed that while we were engaged, they would be able to solve the problem, has been a failure. Solving the Lebanese problem is not an easy task. They were trying to bring Lebanon under the Phalangists [words indistinct] and so rule the country. This was being done by fear and intimidation carried out by Israel and the interfering nations.

In the towns of Sus, Sidon, An-Nabatiyah or in the villages of this region, Israel is, in fact, besieged by the people. It is very difficult for a weak Israel, populated by money-loving and materialist Jews, to remain in Lebanon.

The Muslims will not allow a small Phalangist state to appear — say in east Beirut — that is between Beirut and Tripoli, where the Phalangists might rule. This state would be less than a 1,000 square km. These are but mere dreams.

However, if they gather people like Saddam, King Husayn, Mubarak, and others like them around the Persian Gulf to make them follow their policies and launch a political, economic, and military movement to achieve this — as they are today doing vis-a-vis Iran — I still expect that the situation will turn in favor of the regional nations and not in favor of the United States and its imperialist allies.

Further Report

GF270940 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] The Supreme Defense Council held a meeting yesterday which was chaired by Brother Khamene'i, president and chairman of the Supreme Defense Council. The council reviewed the situation along the fronts of this war imposed on the Islamic Revolution by the regime ruling in Iraq.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Majlis and the imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council, made a statement to journalists, which says in part that the Islamic Republic of Iran — after 40 months of the imposed war — is now experiencing firm and stable conditions while the ruling regime in Iraq suffers from a profound political and financial crisis on the international level.

The imam's representative added that the ruling regime in Iraq, which at the start of the war had huge resources and capabilities, is now experiencing serious financial troubles and is on the verge of collapse. He went on to say that the local protectors of Saddam, despite their huge media campaigns, began to ponder their future after they realized that the end of the ruling regime in Iraq is approaching.

Brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed out in another part of his statement that the Islamic Republic of Iran demands the establishment of a unified Islamic revolutionary movement within the Palestinian revolution to launch an all-out struggle against the entity usurping Jerusalem. Brother Rafsanjani termed the Kissinger plan — which is designed to partition Lebanon — totally unworkable. He added that the Muslim Lebanese rebels are now fighting the forces of the entity usurping Jerusalem in the cities of southern Lebanon and that the Muslims in these regions will not allow the establishment of a Phalangist-sectarian entity in Muslim Lebanon.

The imam's representative stressed that the Islamic revival is overrunning extensive regions of the world following the repercussions of the Islamic Revolution and following the victory attained by the Muslim combatants on the warfronts. He continued to say that this new revival is reflected in the Islamic movements which are witnessed in Lebanon, the southern part of the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Philippines, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Africa. He added that the most conspicuous phenomenon is the overwhelming victory attained by the Muslim Afghan rebels who have succeeded during 4 years of Soviet occupation to annihilate 52,000 of the invading occupiers.

Brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to the decision to deport Iranian diplomats from France and to the deportation of Muslim Iraqi revolutionaries by saying that these measures can only lead to jeopardizing the future of the protectors of the ruling regime in Iraq since Saddam will inevitably go. Brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed that the Kuwaiti Government has to realize the reaction of the Iraqi people and of the Muslim rebels if it ever tries to hand over even one Iraqi to the ruling regime in Iraq.

IRNA Account

LD271057 Tehran IRNA in English 0908 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 27 IRNA — Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Monday said, "The future of the region (middle east) will be in favour of its nations," adding that the United States and other oppressors would have a hard time there.

Speaking after a meeting of the Supreme Defence Council (sdc), Rafsanjani noted that the culmination of the Islamic Revolution in Iran inspired great active forces in the Islamic world who had created Islamic movements in Lebanon, southern Persian Gulf region, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines and various African countries.

These forces were active everywhere especially in Afghanistan where it was said that 52,000 Soviet forces had been killed during the past four years, Majlis speaker said. He stressed that these movements were now frightening the reactionaries and imperialists.

Therefore, Rafsanjani emphasised, expulsion of revolutionary Muslim forces from France and Kuwait could solve no problem.

"At present the life of the Kuwaitis is intermingled with foreigners residing there most of whom are supporting the Islamic revolution of Iran. We do not want them to work for us, but the revolution has automatically mobilised them," Rafsanjani said.

He said that the Iraqi nation would not forgive Kuwait for the expulsion of Iraqis from there, noting that if Kuwait handed over even one Iraqi to the Baghdad regime, it would destroy its future ties with the Iraqi nation since (Iraqi ruler) Saddam would not stay any longer.

Referring to the expulsion of Iranian diplomats from France, the Majlis speaker said, "By taking such measure, France will strain its future relations with this vast revolutionary Islamic movement, as it has already been strained."

On the future of summit conference of Muslim states in Casablanca, Morocco, the Majlis speaker said that present disputes among heads of Islamic countries especially in the Arab world created obstacles in the way of the conference, the date for which was not set yet. Furthermore, he added that in the absence of Iran's diplomatic ties with Morocco it would be a problem for the Islamic Republic to attend the conference if it was to be held there.

Morocco, Rafsanjani noted, was the country which sheltered the toppled shah and supported him, therefore, if they (heads of Islamic states) were interested in Iran's participation in the conference, they should provide the situation in a way to enable the Islamic Republic to attend the meet.

Referring to the issue of Palestine, Rafsanjani said that the Islamic Republic sought to see Palestinians united and employ their unity for a serious fight against the Zionist regime.

On the developments in Lebanon, Rafsanjani who is also Imam Khomeyni's representative at the Supreme Defence Council, said that a plot was hatched to bring Lebanon under a thorough domination of the Phalangists which was thwarted by Muslim people especially forces faithful to the Islamic Republic.

Asked if postponement of operations would lead the battle into a war of attrition, the Majlis speaker stressed that the Islamic combatants would be stronger as the time passed.

But, he added, the case was contrary as far as Iraq was concerned as the regime was inhaling its last breath and its economic credibility was under question in many other countries.

And postponement in operations should not be regarded as giving time to Saddam, but the study of military, Islamic, humanitarian issues by the forces of Islam, Rafsanjani said.

Majlis Speaker Meets With Lebanese Clergyman

LD271729 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] Lebanese clergyman Shaykh Raghib Harb met at noon today with Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. In this meeting, while conveying the greetings of the Muslims of south Lebanon, he submitted a report on the struggles of the Muslim people of that region in confronting the aggressions of the regime occupying Al-Quds, America, and other aggressors. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then expressed his satisfaction and gratitude for these confrontations.

Esfahan Friday Imam Addresses Lebanese Shi'ites

GF261836 Esfahan Domestic Service in Persian 1530 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Excerpts] A group of Lebanese Shi'ites, who were in Iran on the occasion of unity week, met Ayatollah Taheri, the imam's representative and Friday imam of Esfahan [words indistinct] last night. During the meeting, Ayatollah Taheri, citing the holy Koran, told some stories about the great prophet, Lord bless him and all his scion, and recounted a sermon from Nahj al-Balagheh of His Holiness 'Ali, may his shadow be extended, on unity and cooperation among Muslims.

He said: You have revolted against Western civilization and international oppression after having been inspired by the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the scholarly leadership of the great source of emulation and the idol-breaker of the age, His Holiness Grand Ayatollah Imam Khomeyni, may his shadow be extended. Your latest operations have shown the world that you have awakened, like the Muslim Iranian nation, and are trying to expel the supercriminals from your land. You have shown this by bombing and attacking the American headquarters and the French paratroopers where you annihilated a large number. I bring you glad tidings that victory awaits you and you will embrace it soon.

According to the same report, during their 2-day stay in Esfahan, the group toured historical sites and participated in the 40th day mourning ceremony for Mohammad 'Askari, an Iranian martyr in Lebanon, and also paid their respects at the garden of martyrs

in Esfahan. The report adds that the Lebanese brothers also met the commander of the Revolution Guards Corps for District 2.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Communique No 1,586

LD2717 30 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Communique No 1,586 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. Exchanges of fire continued yesterday on the country's northwestern border fronts. The combative forces of Islam, by opening fire on enemy defensive, tank, and artillery positions and supply routes, foiled all enemy activities.

In the Marivan and Panjwin operational areas, our heavy artillery fire halted the movement of the Iraqi forces. In the Piranshahr and Hajj 'Umran operational areas, exchanges of fire continued. Our combatants opened fire on an enemy vehicle column on the Chuman Mustafa supply route, inflicting losses and casualties on the Saddamist forces and stopping enemy movements. On the Bakhtaran and Ilam fronts, the forces of Islam opened fire on a number of enemy vehicles on several supply axes opposite Qasr-e Shirin, Dasht-e Zahab, Naft-e Shahr, and Sumar; they disrupted movement of Iraqi vehicles.

Yesterday, as a result of our forces' fire, the enemy's supply operations and construction activities on the southern fronts were completely stopped. Our ambush and patrol groups also set fire to a number of enemy weapons and killed a number of Iraqi mercenaries. The powerful combatants of Islam based on the banks of the Arvand Rud yesterday destroyed nine enemy trenches and foxholes in an area west of the river and killed or wounded a number of aggressors.

As a result of the enemy's long-range weapons fire on Abadan, some of the city's installations were damaged yesterday.

[Signed] Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

'Conference on Saddam's Crimes' Ends 23 Dec

LD231442 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Dec 83

[Excerpts] According to an IRNA report, the conference on Saddam's crimes ended last night with a resolution. The text of the resolution was read by Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mohammad Bakr Hakim, spokesman for the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq.

The resolution reads in part: The crimes committed by Saddam, this satan of the era, are not confined to one area: They are against knowledge, religion, and humanity. With regard to domestic affairs, Saddam has committed the most tragic crimes, including the crime of the century — the martyring of the initiator of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, Martyr Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Sadr, may God the most exalted send his soul to heaven — and also killing dozens of the ulema, clergymen, and masters of seminaries; bloody purges of Islamic movements; expulsion of tens of thousands of Kurdish Muslim brothers; ruining dozens of Kurdish inhabited villages; imposition of brutal penal codes on the Iraqi nation and implementing them retrospectively; arrest of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi subjects on ideological and political charges; imposition of mass punishments on families, villages, and cities which oppose the regime and taking their close relatives hostage in revenge; impositions of servitude and contempt and a state of intimidation and terror on all the nation; making the country dependent on world arrogance; destruction of the personality of Iraqi subjects; and trying to change the social, ethnic, and religious structure of Iraqi society.

Condemning UN resolutions on the Iran-Iraq war, which were passed under the pressure of world arrogance, the resolution continues: The Saddam regime is by no means the representative of the Iraqi people and this nation will never recognize the loans, treaties, and conventions signed by this regime. On the contrary, the Iraqi nation will severely call to account all those circles and regimes which give material, military, political, and propaganda help to that regime.

Participants in the conference called for the open trial of the criminal Saddam before the public opinion of Muslims and the people of the world and called for verdicts proportional to the crimes he has committed. They announced the opening of a permanent office for investigating and following up Saddam's crimes and demanded that the United Nations recognize this resolution as an official political document, condemning Saddam for his crimes, his aggressive positions, and suspicious attachments against the two Muslim nations of Iraq and Iran and against all the region's nations.

It should be noted that the conference on Saddam's crimes was held in Tehran during unity week, with the participation of delegations from 34 Asian, African, European, and North and South American countries. Participants inspected the Islamic Republic of Iran regions ruined by the aggression of the Zionist Saddamists; they also visited an Iraqi POW camp. The guests were honored by being received by the imam of the nation and leader of the Islamic Revolution, His Holiness Imam Khomeyni, and listened to his holiness' valuable directives.

Tudeh Party Members Trial Continues

LD242237 Tehran IRNA in English 1951 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec 24, IRNA — The trial of clandestine members of the Tudeh Party's secret military organisation continued today and five of the six defendants said they had not gathered any information for the Tudeh Party concerning their work.

The defendants were police warrant Officer Khalil Qannadi Azar, Colonel Asgar Ghiyassi, 1st Lieutenant Assadollah Darik-Vani, police NCO Mahdi Mostafavi, Abazar Gholami, and Nabiyollah Zadeh-Nur. Party chief Nurredin Kianuri as well as Mahdi [name indistinct], Mohammad Moa'zez, and Mohammad Bahraminejad attended the trial as witnesses.

Colonel Ghiyassi denied being a member of the Tudeh Party and said he had discontinued his meetings with party officials 18 months ago. His party contact, Bahraminejad, confirmed the latter's statements and said Ghiyassi clearly did not show any interest to continue intitial meetings and was not considered a Tudeh member.

But the fifth defendant in today's trial, Abazar Gholami admitted passing information to the Tudeh gathered from the war fronts. He said he thought the information would be used against counterrevolutionaries.

The military tribunal of the Islamic Revolution will resume its sessions tomorrow (Sunday).

Pleas of Guilty

GF251626 Tehran IRNA in English 1553 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA — The trial of three other members of the secret military wing of the defunct Tudeh Party resumed here and the defendants pleaded guilty to the charges. Ex-servicemen Khalil Banyaie Masuleh, Hoseyn Ramezani, and Faleh Fazeli spoke in their defence after the court heard their indictments while Bahraminezhad, Moa'zez and Partovi, former high ranking members of the Tudeh Party military wing were brought to the trial to give testimony concerning the charges.

Former Major Khalili Banyaie Masuleh pleaded guilty to all the charges such as being a member of a party while in the army despite Imam Khomeyni's decree that no one in the armed forces should hold membership in a political party. He asked the court to show mercy upon him.

The next defendant was Hoseyn Ramezani who denied having played any active role in the party saying that following Imam Khomeyni's decree he remained in the army implying that he had stopped being a Tudeh Party member. Bahraminezhad then confirmed Ramezani's statement saying he had only attended one meeting.

Ex-sergeant Major Faleh Fazeli also pleaded guilty stating that he was uncertain about continuing his membership after he had been enlightened by his wife and television interviews between party officials and Martyr Ayatollah Beheshti. Bahraminezhad confirmed Fazeli's statement adding that the party gave him, as a military branch leader, responsibility of unimportant individuals. Bahraminezhad took the opportunity to say that he had been unaware of the espionage activities of the party.

The court will reconvene on Tuesday to hear cases of yet some other military members of the pro-Moscow defunct Tudeh Party.

27 December Proceedings

LD271748 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Text] In continuation of the trial of the members of the secret military organizations of the defunct, traitorous Tudeh Party, the trial of the members of the fourth branch of these organizations, led by Khosrow Lotfi, alias Kazem, began this morning in the army's Islamic Revolution court under the chairmanship of Hojjat ol-Eslam Reyshahri. Our correspondent reports that during the session, following the reading of the indictment by the public prosecutor, the first accused, Khosrow Lotfi, explained how he became acquainted with the Tudeh Party and, while sobbing, answered the accusations leveled at him concerning his involvement with the Tudeh Party.

He was followed by Mohammad moa'zez, another accused, who gave an account on the activities of Khosrow Lotfi.

Later in the session, the second accused, Bizhan Heydarian, defended himself. While admitting all accusations leveled at him, he said a few things in connection with his activities.

Today's session of the court ended at noon and the next session of the court will be held tomorrow morning in order to continue investigating the accusations leveled at other defendants.

IRNA Account

LD281022 Tehran IRNA in English 0921 GMT 28 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 27, IRNA — The trial of the fourth group of secret Tudeh Party members, under the responsibility of Khosrow Lofti, began at the military tribunal of the Islamic revolution today.

Khosrow Lofti said he was unaware that the information gathered from the military was sent to Soviet officials but admitted hiding weapons taken from military barracks during the revolution.

"The (party officials) had told me that the party gave its secret information to government officials but had also said that we (lower ranking party members) could not pass the information on to government officials directly...," he said.

Lofti said he acknowledged Imam Khomeyni's support for deprived people and "for this reason I accept any verdict issued by the court."

The tribunal, presided over by the Islamic judge, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Reyshahri, also heard part of the defence made by Bizan Heydariyan, who held regular meetings with Lofti.

Heydariyan admitted being a member of the Tudeh party but said he was unaware of the Tudeh's military organisation.

The prosecutor, Colonel Atabaki, said Heydariyan was once arrested last year for distributing Tudeh leaflets in military uniform but was released after denying any links with the Tudeh.

The trial will resume Wednesday.

Television Coverage

LD281026 Tehran IRNA in English 0922 GMT 28 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran Dec. 27 IRNA — The Iranian television began to broadcast of the trial of the ex-navy commander, Captain Bahram 'Afzali Tuesday night. 'Afzali was the first among the secret military members of the Tudeh Party, whose leaders have confessed to spying for the Soviet Union.

The Iranian television has broadcast similar programs in the past. Back in the summer of 1980 participants in the attempted "Nojeh" military coup were viewed by the Iranian public during the televised trial procedures.

The secretary general of the defunct Tudeh Party, Nureddin Kianuri and many other high-ranking Tudeh officials also appeared on television several months ago to confess on their spying for the Soviet Union and attempting to overthrow the Islamic Republic.

NVOI Refutes Charges Against Tudeh Officers

TA261202 (Clandestine) National Voice of Iran in Persian 1730 GMT 24 Dec 83

[Unattributed commentary: "Another Stain of Shame on Islamic Regime"]

[Text] Dear compatriots: When the rulers of the Islamic Republic saw that, contrary to their expectation, the shows of the so-called television confessions and admissions of a number of leaders and cadres of the Iranian Tudeh Party had a counter-effect in public opinion, that they disgraced and defamed the Islamic regime in the view of the Iranian people and world public opinion, and that they aroused the anger and indignation of all noble and freedom-loving individuals, these rulers brought onstage the serial of ominous shows of the conspiracy of the revolution's total defeat.

This time they brought before a so-called court, and behind closed doors, groups of patriotic and noble officers, and are charging them with the same baseless and ridiculous accusations. The charges leveled against these noble and patriotic officers are the very baseless and unfounded accusations of spying for a foreign country and participation in a plot to stage a coup, of which leaders of the Islamic Regime are accusing the Iranian Tudeh Party.

Although these so-called trials are taking place behind closed doors and although foreign correspondents and even members of the families of the accused are not allowed to be present in these kangaroo courts — despite the fact that this is contrary to the explicit text of Article 35 of the Constitution — the accused have been deprived of defense attorneys. Despite this, the Islamic Republic's executioners and judges have not been able to obtain and present the slightest bit of evidence to prove the revelations of these officers regarding secret military information or their participation in a coup plot, because such evidence does not exist.

However, secrets that a military man can normally reveal or hand over to another person are of two types. They are either about the type and quantity of weapons and equipment or relate to tactical and strategic war plans. The Iranian army's weapons and equipment are either those same U.S. weapons and equipment left over from the previous regime or they are purchased illicitly through several intermediaries, at several times their price, during the era of the Islamic regime by international middlemen, including Israelis. The type and quantity of these weapons and equipment are no secret to anyone so that no one would deem it necessary to reveal their secrets.

However, regarding warplanes, since the liberation of Khorramshahr, one cannot find even a single attack or comparatively serious war operation by Iran's Armed Forces that had not been obvious and apparent to everyone weeks or even months in advance. Every time the Islamic Republic's military experts design a plan for military operations, clergymen — who under various pretexts control all affairs of the army and the Corps, either for ostentatious reasons or with the aim of informing their Western overlords — disclose even the time and place of military operations and plans. As a result, the Armed Forces' impending operations are discussed and analyzed in every house, alley, and district. This only leads us to ask: What are the secret reports that these noble and patriotic officers are accused of revealing?

These secrets are probably expressions of clear and obvious facts about the futility and uselessness of the continuation of the destructive imposed war. The war's prolongation is to the benefit of imperialism, the economic terrorists, and the corrupt clergy. Its countless damages are for the toilers of Iran and Iraq and demonstrate intervention by ignorant clergymen who lack any military knowledge in all affairs of the Corps and the army. Educated and experienced officers understand better than anyone that war and military operations are an exact science.

No clergyman or hojjat ol-Eslam, even the imam's deputy himself, has the slightest knowledge of this science. Their interventions in war and military affairs, whether wittingly or not, are treachery against the homeland and people and only serve imperialism, reaction,and the counterrevolution. The protest of noble and patriotic officers and the statement of facts by them is the only offense that the leaders of the Islamic regime cannot forgive. These noble and patriotic officers have committed no other offense than this so-called unforgivable crime.

Despite all the savage tortures and torments prior to the contrived trials, as well as various threats and intimidations, these officers are saying the following in the fake courts: Under no circumstances have I given secret information to the party. I cannot accept the disgrace of spying for foreigners and I never entertained the thought of spying or overthrowing the regime.

At present it is no longer a secret to anyone that the so-called trial of noble and patriotic officers is the continuation of the same shows by imperialism and its Islamic agents, namely, the slaughter of true revolutionaries and patriots within the country and projection of the true friends and backers of the revolution and the toilers of our homeland on the international scene as enemies.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Hails IRP Success

LD281036 Tehran IRNA in English 0905 GMT 28 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA — Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Tuesday said that despite all sort of rumours, "the Islamic Republic is marching forward on the road of progress." Stressing on the fact that Iran would continue progress he said, "Iran will remain and its enemies will vanish."

In a meeting with a group of Islamic Republic Party's [IRP] members for the Central Province, Rafsanjani noted that if Egyptians were left free, they would establish an Islamic republic there. He added that people of the Persian Gulf region, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and many other places were also thirsty for Islam.

The affection for Islam and the Islamic Republic, Rafsanjani noted, had reached its peak in Lebanon where people, after the closure of the Islamic Republic's embassy there, had for several times blocked the way to the airport to the Iranian ambassador upon his decision to leave that country.

In Iraq, the speaker said, people would secretly celebrate victories of the Islamic forces of Iran in fronts of the Iraqi imposed war. While Iraqi forces were shelling Iranian residential quarters, Islamic Republic's aircraft would not attack targets in Iraq if even a single person would be seen in the area, Rafsanjani said.

Hailing sincere services of IRP members, the Majlis speaker emphasised that although the Tudeh Party, the freedom movement [Iran Liberation Movement], Munafiqeen (Mojahedin-e Khalq organisation), Feda'i-ye Khalq and other splinter groups gave colourful promises in the interest of the oppressed and tried to deceive school children to absorb them, they failed to achieve any success. He reiterated that the key to the success for the Islamic Republic Party had been sincerity and good intention of its members.

Rafsanjani said that with the present elements in the Islamic Republic Party, it was far beyond expectation to see any unpopular or non-Islamic movement one day in the party. If, he stressed, one day it was thought that the IRP was not moving in the direction of the revolution and people's unity, its dissolution would be announced without any hesitation.

He called on the IRP's members to rush and help people in cities facing with difficulties and those who were having hard times.

Montazeri Replies to Letters of Support

LD232222 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Dec 83

[Text] Various ayatollahs, hojaj-e Eslam, Friday imams, deputies of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the militant clergy association from different towns and cities, and officials in charge of revolutionary organs and establishments throughout the country have sent letters and cables of support to Grand Ayatollah Montazeri in praise of the imam of the nation's prophet-like instrucitons and Grand Ayatollah Montazeri's remarks. Today, Grand Ayatollah Montazeri issued the following reply:

In His exalted name. To honorable ayatollahs and hojaj-e Eslam, the esteemed Friday imams, honorable deputies of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the militant clergy association of towns and cities, and the responsible officials of many organs and establishments: May Almighty God assist you all. While thanking the honorable gentlemen for their cables and letters expressing support for the recent instructions of the great leadership of the revolution, may his lofty shadow remain on earth for a long time. As for my brotherly recommendations, I would like to reiterate that under the present circumstances of the revolution, the defeated enemies of Islam and their internal agents have started a vast struggle to disturb the existing unity and destroy and isolate the talented forces committed to Islam and the revolution.

All individuals and strata are dutybound to rely on fundamental principles which are acceptable by all and to avoid deeds that, God forbid, might bring satisfaction and happiness to the enemies. In case there are differences of opinion on some of the minor and nonbasic issues, you should raise and resolve them with the same Islamic methods recommended by the Koran.

The gentlemen are fully aware that after the impasse and the defeat of the military and economic plots of the enemies of Islam and the revolution and when their propaganda against the Islamic Republic reached an impasse, they thought of a new idea and are trying to create pessimism between the nation and the government by resorting to various infusions via their radios and agents. Each day, they provoke one faction against another in order to harm the existing unity of word and understanding. They try to push aside a number of the religious and revolutionary froces from the arena by criticizing their ideas in order to ruin and disintegrate the revolution from inside. If today, on the eve of the Majlis elections, we were to ignore this danger and if the instructions of his great eminence imam, may his lofty shadow continue remaining on earth, were not to be put into practice, then, God forbid, the plot to isolate and separate the genuine forces committed to Islam and the revolution might be implemented at the time of the elections and a heavy blow might be delivered on the glory of the Islamic Republic.

I beseech Almighty God to grant further success to you honorable gentlemen in your effort to safeguard the great gains of the Islamic Revolution and to strengthen the existing unity among the vigilant nation. May Almighty God grant the final victory to the combatants of Islam on all fronts and a long life to the great leader of the revolution. May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you all.

[Signed] Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, 23 December

TANJUG Cites Paper on Public Discontent

LD252007 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1626 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Text] Tehran, December 25 (TANJUG) — Rumours about the "incompetence of the Iranian Government" have given rise to public discontent, reports the Tehran *KEYHAN INTERNATIONAL* in its editorial today, Sunday.

The newspaper says that rumours have been circulating that President Seyyed 'Ali Hojjat-ol-Eslam Khamene'i is dissatisfied with the present cabinet and that talk in the bazaar, mosques and private meetings has it that the government is unable to resolve the country's problems.

KEYHAN INTERNATIONAL added that some "religious men" wrote letters criticizing the government's five year plan as "Marxist" and warning the people of the dangers of its implementation.

In this context, some members of the Islamic clergy maintained that the government should not impose taxes when religious levies were being collected and claimed that the whole public sector in Iran was "un-Islamic."

Reacting to the climate created by these rumours, Imam Khomeyni warned the "misled members of the clergy" that they had "adopted a counter-revolutionary slogan." He called on them to give full support to Prime Minister Musavi's government.

Khomeyni Receives Mining Minister 25 Dec

LD251411 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Dec 83

[Excerpt] Mines and Metals Minister Nili, accompanied by several ministry deputies and responsible officials, this morning was received in audience by Imam Khomeyni, great leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the course of this meeting, he reported to the imam of the nation on the efforts of ministry workers and officials in extraction from the mines, the operation of the metal smelting industries, and the start of work on the second furnace of the iron foundry.

New Friday Imam of Khorramshahr Appointed

LD271241 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Dec 83

[Excerpt] Imam Khomeyni's office has appointed Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Abolhasan Nuri as the Friday imam of Khorramshahr.